What is claimed is:

1. An antibody, antibody derivative, or antigen-binding polypeptide that binds to an epitope within the amino acid sequence: SSDGLWNNNQTQLFLEHS (SEQ ID NO:1).

2. An antibody, antibody derivative, or antigen-binding polypeptide that has the same epitope specificity as the antibody produced by the hybridoma deposited in the ATCC under Accession No. PTA-3350.

3. An antibody, antibody derivative, or antigen-binding polypeptide that crossblocks binding of the antibody produced by the hybridoma deposited in the ATCC under Accession No. PTA-3350.

4. The antibody, antibody derivative, or antigen-binding polypeptide of claim 1,2 or 3, wherein the antibody is a humanized monoclonal antibody.

5. The antibody, antibody derivative, or antigen-binding polypeptide of claim 1,2 or 3, wherein the antibody is a fully human antibody.

6. A conjugate comprising the antibody, antibody derivative, or antigen-binding polypeptide of claim 1, 2 or 3 linked to a detectable label.

7. A conjugate or fusion polypeptide comprising the antibody, antibody derivative, or antigen-binding polypeptide of claim 1, 2 or 3 and a toxin moiety.

8. An antibody produced by the hybridoma deposited with ATCC under Accession No. PTA-3350.

9. Hybridoma ABE3, deposited with ATCC under Accession No. PTA-3350.

10. A nucleic acid encoding the monoclonal antibody produced by the hybridoma of claim 9.

11. A composition comprising the antibody, antibody derivative, or antigen-binding polypeptide of claim 1, 2 or 3 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

12. A method of inhibiting release of a soluble form of a KIM-1 polypeptide from a cell, the method comprising contacting a cell expressing a KIM-1 cell surface polypeptide with an effective amount of the antibody, antibody derivative, or antigen-binding polypeptide or claim 1, 2 or 3.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein the cell is a renal cell.

14. The method of claim 12, wherein the cell is in vitro.

15. The method of claim 12, wherein the cell is in vivo.

16. A method of inhibiting proteolysis of a KIM-1 polypeptide, the method comprising contacting a cell expressing a KIM-1 polypeptide with an effective amount of the antibody, antibody derivative, or antigen-binding polypeptide of claim 1, 2 or 3.

17. A method of treating or preventing renal disease or injury in a mammal, the method comprising administering to the mammal an effective amount of the antibody, antibody derivative, or antigen-binding polypeptide or claim 1, 2 or 3.

18. The method of claim 17, wherein the renal disease or injury is renal cancer.

19. The method of claim 18, wherein the renal cancer is renal carcinoma.

20. The method of claim 17, wherein the effective amount is from 0.1 mg/kg to 100 mg/kg.

21. The method of claim 17, wherein the effective amount is from 1 mg/kg to 20 mg/kg.

22. The method of claim 17, wherein the mammal is a human.